congress 2016
OF THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

energizing communities

Highlights
May 28 to June 3, 2016
#congresssh
About Congress

The Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences is proud to have brought you the 85th Congress, the largest academic gathering in Canada, and one of the largest in the world. With over 5,000 papers presented this year at the University of Calgary, Congress is a unique opportunity for the humanities and social science (HSS) research community to connect with colleagues and peers, but also to network and share research and findings with policy-makers, funding agencies, the media and the public at large. Over seven exciting days, this annual event had something for everyone:

- Unparalleled opportunity for cross-disciplinary scholarly discussions
- Professional development workshops for scholars at all career stages
- Forward-looking programming on issues such as the reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, the value of a university or college degree, exploring methodologies for HSS research impact, and so much more
- Sessions on funding opportunities with federal granting agencies and other actors such as Mitacs and Genome Canada
- Information on international research collaboration opportunities
- Canada’s largest academic trade show, Expo

Big Thinking

The Big Thinking series at Congress featured leading scholars and public figures who presented forward-looking research, thought-provoking ideas and solutions to the critical issues of our time.

- The power to change: Leadership, community and resiliency
  His Worship Naheed Nenshi

- Big Thinking and rethinking: Blackfoot metaphysics
  ‘waiting in the wings’
  Leroy Little Bear

- The rule of law in a multicultural society
  The Right Honourable
  Beverley McLachlin

- Losing the thread of the conversation: Covering Canadian politics in the social media era
  Chantal Hébert

- This changes everything: Capitalism vs. the climate
  Naomi Klein

- Navigating the global food fight: Trade, food security and the battle for policy space
  Jennifer Clapp

Videos of all these Big Thinking lectures can be viewed at: congress2016.ca/bigthinking

Energizing Communities

In keeping with the Congress 2016 theme of “Energizing communities,” this year’s Congress was a stimulating forum for scholarly engagement, energizing relationships across communities, leading to new connections and ultimately new ways of thinking through its diverse programming. Over and above the 73 participating associations’ own extensive programs, there was a plethora of sessions to attend, including a roster of six Big Thinking lectures organized by the Federation and six Interdisciplinary Symposia championed by various UCalgary faculties. Career Corner workshops provided opportunities to learn how to write more effectively, get published more quickly and manage parenting in academia. Highlights of this year’s Congress include:

- the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council’s annual Storytellers Showcase, and a special session on communicating complex research with CBC Ideas host Paul Kennedy
- a half-day public forum on reconciliation Sharing the Land, Sharing a Future with Federation Board member Cindy Blackstock and six Federation member associations
- a Royal Society of Canada sponsored event on the future of end-of-life decision-making in Canada
- the Canada Prizes award ceremony preceded by a reception and moderated conversation with the four winners

Congress by the numbers

- 7,800 attendees from 73 scholarly associations
- 5,050 papers
- 6 Big Thinking events attended by 2,500 people
- 16 Career Corner sessions attended by 776 people
- 421 media stories
- 17,818 tweets using #congressh hashtag
- 52 exhibitors at Expo
- 24 special events and book launches in Expo attended by 750 people
- 82% of attendees that rated Congress as Good or Excellent
Host university programming

While opening its arms and campus to over 1,400 evacuees from the fires in Northern Alberta, UCalgary hosted an impressive array of Congress events. A series of Interdisciplinary Symposia explored novel cross-disciplinary research on issues of national and global importance in HSS:

- Building A2SJ: An interdisciplinary conversation about problems and solutions
- Compassion under contemporary conditions:Keynote with Margaret Atwood; panels with scholars and community leaders
- Energizing by design: Examining how design-based research is transforming the built environment
- Energizing communities for change = Mobilizing our graduate students for diverse careers
- Spaces of gender and sexual security
- Energizing cities: The role and future of community associations

UCalgary also hosted various cultural events:

- The Container (Drama)
- Pseudolus - A Comedy by Plautus (Drama)
- All Good Things (Drama)
- Time (Dance)
- The UCalgary Klezmer Band (Music)
- Neil Cockburn, Laura Hynes and the UCalgary String Quartet (Music)
- Big Head/Small Neck (Dance)
- Sonic Horizons: New music from the University of Calgary (Music)

Impact on community and campus

Congress had an estimated $6 million economic impact in the City of Calgary:

1,400 Fort McMurray evacuees housed on campus during Congress
8,000 hotel and residence room nights
427 local volunteers
90 local hires
41 on-campus receptions
5,000+ pieces of AV equipment used
23,752 coffee cups served by UCalgary catering
2,100 attendees at 4 President’s Receptions
41 children 6 months to 12 years in onsite child minding

Congress in the news

Creating meaningful connections between researchers and the broader community is a key goal for Congress organizers, who proactively reach out to media outlets, to promote and convey the value of humanities and social sciences research to Canadians.

Congress 2016 research garnered extensive media coverage from regional and national outlets, with 421 stories running in over 73 different online, print and radio outlets. Highlights include:

- The Calgary Herald published a whopping 22 stories leading up to and during Congress, featuring all six Big Thinking speakers in the ‘academic Olympics’ in Calgary as well as number of individual researchers.
- The National Post ran a five-part series “Oh, the Humanities” which featured an assortment of research, from Justin Trudeau’s social media abilities, to cattle branding as a symbol of Western pride, to the trend of reverting place names to Indigenous antecedents.
- The Globe and Mail announced the arrival of Congress in a story called University of Calgary to host an inside scoop on Canadian politics.
- Maclean’s magazine ran a story called Liberals concede ‘risk’ of missing assisted-death deadline following Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin’s Big Thinking lecture.
- The Toronto Star ran a front-page story called Police: body-worn cameras ‘not a magic bullet,’ say U of T researchers.

Upcoming Congresses:

2018
University of Regina
Regina, Saskatchewan
May 26 to June 1, 2018

2019
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, British Columbia
June 1 to 7, 2019

Learn more at: congress2017.ca
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